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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1778 (2007), by which the Council established a multidimensional presence in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic to help create security conditions conducive to the voluntary, secure and sustainable return of refugees and displaced persons. In that resolution, the Council requested me to report to it every three months on the security and humanitarian situation in eastern Chad, the north-eastern Central African Republic and the region, as well as on progress made in creating security conditions conducive to the return of refugees and displaced persons. This report covers major developments since my last report, of 10 August 2007 (S/2007/488), including preparations for the deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), the European Union-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic) and the Police tchadienne pour la protection humanitaire (PTPH).

II. Update on recent developments

A. Political

2. During the reporting period there were mixed developments in the political and security situation in Chad. On 13 August 2007, the Mouvement Patriotique du Salut (MPS) and the Coordination des Partis politiques pour la Défense de la Constitution (CPDC) signed an agreement with the Government of Chad on the reinforcement of the democratic process. The parties agreed, inter alia, to postpone the 2007 legislative elections to late 2009 in order to: allow the holding of a population census, which would be followed by an update of the voter's register; revise the composition of the National Independent Electoral Commission; re-constitute the electoral body to comprise an equal number of political party representatives; and extend the mandate of the current legislature until the establishment of an elected National Assembly. As agreed by the parties, on 31 August 2007, President Déby established by decree a Comité de suivi et d'appui to follow up the implementation of the agreement. Since its establishment, the committee has held several working sessions. The African Union, the European

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Union, the Organisation internationale de la francophonie and the United Nations participate in the committee as observers.

3. On 25 October 2007, the Government of Chad and the main Chadian armed opposition groups in eastern Chad (the Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD), the Rassemblement des Forces pour le Changement (RFC), the Concorde Nationale Tchadienne (CNT) and the Union des forces pour la démocratie et le développement fondamental (UFDDF) signed a peace agreement in Sirte in the presence of the Libyan Head of State, Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi, and President Omer al-Bashir of the Sudan. The parties agreed to respect the constitution, cease fighting, grant amnesty to the rebels, allow rebel groups to participate in the running of state affairs, integrate rebel forces into the Chadian national army. They also agreed to hold another meeting in Tripoli, including all political parties and relevant civil society organizations, to follow up on the implementation of the Sirte agreement. To date, the provisions of this agreement have not been implemented and there has been a resurgence of fighting between the same rebel groups (UFDD, RFC and the Front Uni pour le Changement (FUC)) and the Chadian national army in eastern Chad.

B. Security

4. The security situation in the east remained fluid, with continued rebel movements, banditry and worsening security on the roads. On 12 October, clashes in Guereda between the Tama and Zaghawa groups resulted in a number of casualties and displaced civilians, and temporarily forced the suspension of humanitarian activities. Several cases of extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, as well as the arrest and detention of military and gendarmes, were also reported. Following these clashes, on 16 October 2007, President Déby issued a decree imposing a state of emergency for 12 days in the Ouaddai and Wadi Fira regions and in the Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti region. To date, the state of emergency remains in force.

5. On 25 November, the Chadian gendarmes hired by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to assist in the protection of the Koukou Angarana refugee camp (some 200 kilometre from Abéché) were attacked by UFDD and RFC rebels, killing one national and wounding two international aid workers. On 26 November 2007, a counter attack by the Chadian national army resulted in the death of several people and a number of wounded.

6. On 30 November 2007, UFDD issued a statement declaring that it was at war against the French army and any other foreign force in the national territory. On 3 December 2007, President Sarkozy of France stated that the European Union-led peacekeeping force would deploy to Chad, in spite of these threats.

7. Following the resumption of clashes between the national army and FUC on 1 December 2007, President Déby dismissed the Chadian Minister of Defense and former leader of FUC, Mahamat Nour, who sought refuge in the Libyan Embassy in N'Djamena. The recent fighting in eastern Chad between the national army and the rebel movements has reportedly resulted in hundreds of casualties on all sides, with all sides claiming victory in the battlefield. Meanwhile, the Government and the rebel groups have been blaming each other for failing to respect the Sirte agreement. The scale of the population displacement as a result of the fighting has yet to be assessed.

8. Notwithstanding the agreements of 8 February 2006 and 3 May 2007 on the normalization of the relations between Chad and the Sudan, on 26 November, the Government of Chad accused the Sudan of supporting Chadian rebel groups operating in the eastern part of the country.

9. Turning to the Central African Republic, ongoing insecurity in Darfur and its subregional consequences continue to be of serious concern. Between July and September 2007, some 80 Tora Bora (Darfur rebels) combatants believed to have come from Darfur were disarmed in the town of Sam Ouandja in the Haute-Kotto prefecture in the Central African Republic. Recent fighting in Um Dukhun, West Darfur, caused 86 Sudanese to flee to Birao, in the Vakaga prefecture, including 67 Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) militants later disarmed by the Central African Armed Forces (FACA).

10. In the meantime, and as I last reported to the Council on 5 December (S/2007/697), the Government of the Central African Republic and the opposition parties agreed, on 30 November, on the text of a Presidential decree aimed at establishing a dialogue preparatory committee. In addition, the Government and the Popular Army for the Restoration of Democracy (APRD), the last remaining rebel group, have entered into discussions with the aim of signing a new peace agreement.

C. Humanitarian and human rights

11. There are currently 240,000 Darfurian refugees and 180,000 internally displaced persons in eastern Chad. Repeated reports of violations of the humanitarian and civilian character of the refugee camps have been reported, including the presence of arms and rebels in and around the camps.

12. Following the attempt by a French association, Arche de Zoé, to remove 103 children from Chad on 25 October 2007, the Government of Chad imposed travel restrictions on humanitarian workers, impeding the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the vulnerable population. The United Nations is making every effort to ensure that the credibility and efficiency of humanitarian work in eastern Chad is not tainted by the Arche de Zoé incident. In this context, on 8 November, I issued a statement condemning the Arche de Zoé incident and underscored the urgent need for all concerned individuals, organizations and institutions to fully respect international legal instruments.

13. The deteriorating security situation in eastern Chad has limited humanitarian access to some refugee camps and internally displaced persons' sites, and has left the affected Chadian populations feeling insecure. Refugee camps in Farchana, Guereda, Iriba and Goz Beida, which together host some 212,000 refugees from Darfur, are starting to suffer the consequences of the volatile situation. In spite of the challenges, the United Nations and its operational partners continue to provide assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons. In addition, contingency planning is under way to ensure sustained provision of assistance, in the event that the security situation deteriorates further.

14. The deployment of a Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator to Abéché will contribute to enhance coordination in the delivery of services to the internally displaced persons. UNHCR has recently initiated, jointly with the local authorities, the Association of the Chadian Traditional Chiefs and non-governmental

organizations, an inter-community dialogue to facilitate an eventual return and reintegration strategy for the internally displaced.

15. In regard to the Central African Republic, 300,000 Central Africans remain displaced throughout the region, including 80,000 refugees in Chad, Cameroon and the Darfur region of the Sudan, including 197,000 internally displaced persons, mostly in the north-western part of the Central African Republic. In the north-eastern part, however, many of the inhabitants of Birao who fled the region as a result of fighting between the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR) and FACA have returned to the town and are rebuilding their homes.

III. Establishment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad

16. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1778 (2007), the United Nations has undertaken steps to prepare for the effective implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCAT), including the establishment of the Police tchadienne pour la protection humanitaire (PTPH).

17. As of 10 December 2007, a total of 68 MINURCAT international staff, including police, military liaison, political affairs, and support staff had been deployed. Some 30 United Nations police officers, who have been deployed to N'Djamena, have started the process of nomination and selection of PTPH personnel.

18. The Mission is working with the Government of Chad on the implementation of the concept of the Police tchadienne pour la protection humanitaire. While MINURCAT has secured the agreement of the Government on a number of technical issues, there are other substantive matters that require further discussion, including the nature of the relationship between PTPH and MINURCAT.

19. President Déby has appointed his Special Adviser on diplomatic matters as his Special Representative for MINURCAT and the European Union-led peacekeeping force Chad/Central African Republic, and has created the Coordination nationale d'appui à la force internationale to facilitate and coordinate the deployment of MINURCAT and the European Union-led force and act as their single interlocutor.

20. During the period under review, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, visited Chad on 16 and 17 November. Mr. Mulet met with, among others, the Prime Minister, Dr. Nouradine Delwa Kassiré Coumakoye, who confirmed that President Déby had asked him to ensure that the Government provides full support to MINURCAT's deployment.

21. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1778 (2007), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to mobilize Member States and institutional donors to support the establishment of PTPH, the United Nations has established a MINURCAT trust fund. The trust fund will support the activities of MINURCAT, and would specifically cover the costs of PTPH. It has been estimated that some $23 million would be required to support the training and deployment of PTPH during its first year of operation. I am particularly pleased that the Governments of Japan ($2.2 million), Norway ($1 million) and Belgium (€250,000) and the

European Commission (€10 millions) have already confirmed their commitment to contribute to the trust fund. I thank these Member States and the European Commission for their support to the Mission, and invite others to consider contributing to the trust fund. I would like to stress that without the immediate availability of funds, PTPH training cannot commence as planned.

22. MINURCAT and UNHCR, in consultation with the Government of Chad, have prepared a general framework for the gradual hand-over of law and order duties in the refugee camps from the UNHCR-supported Chadian gendarmes to PTPH. This process will be completed by April 2008, pending the deployment of the European Union peacekeeping force Chad/Central African Republic.

23. In accordance with paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 1778 (2007), the United Nations has transmitted a draft status-of-mission agreement to the Government of Chad. Discussions are ongoing and it is my hope that the agreement will be concluded in a timely manner.

24. With regard to the police for MINURCAT, at the time of writing, out of the 300 authorized United Nations police officers, 70 had been selected and 32 were already deployed to N'Djamena. The total number of candidates submitted by police-contributing countries thus far is still insufficient. Member States have been invited to submit additional candidates.

25. An integrated assessment mission consisting of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and possibly the European Commission, is scheduled to visit Chad in early 2008 to review the needs of the judicial and prison systems in eastern Chad. The team will: identify the specific areas that require rule of law assistance to support the MINURCAT police component and PTPH in maintaining law and order; refine the role and function of MINURCAT's judicial and prison advisory units; identify areas of collaboration and joint-programming to strengthen justice and corrections institutions in eastern Chad; and assess the opportunity to establish an inter-agency rule of law coordination mechanism for eastern Chad. This mission, initially scheduled to travel to Chad in early December, was postponed at the request of the Government of Chad due to fighting in the eastern part of the country.

26. Out of the 50 authorized United Nations military liaison officers, 25 will be deployed by January 2008. The Chief Military Liaison Officer (Colonel) and the Deputy Military Liaison Officer (Lieutenant-Colonel) are already deployed in the Mission area. A senior military liaison officer, at the Lieutenant-Colonel level, will be deployed to the EUFOR operational headquarters in France by the end of December. The remaining 23 military liaison officers, consisting of 4 Lieutenant Colonels, 17 captains or majors and 2 non-commissioned officers, will deploy to the European Union peacekeeping force Chad/Central African Republic locations in Chad and north-eastern Central African Republic to facilitate coordination and liaison.

27. With regard to the north-eastern Central African Republic, MINURCAT will establish a small presence in Bangui, co-located with the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA), to liaise with the Government and further assess specific requirements to support national

authorities and address groups made vulnerable by the spillover of violence from Darfur.

28. As of 15 October, MINURCAT had established its start-up headquarters in central N'Djamena with a logistics facility nearby. Essential equipment has been transported by air from strategic deployment stocks held at the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy (UNLB). The balance of the equipment will be shipped by sea from a number of sources, including strategic deployment stocks and United Nations reserves and surplus from downsizing and liquidating missions.

29. During the period under review, a United Nations team of planners visited Brussels and Paris to highlight United Nations requirements and to develop close working relations between the EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic and MINURCAT. The United Nations has requested the European Union to provide logistics support to MINURCAT in several areas, including medical, food, rations and petrol, oil and lubricants. The European Union has agreed to provide logistical support within its means and capabilities and discussions are well advanced on these issues. The Department of Field Support has deployed a logistical planner to the EUFOR operational headquarters in Paris to ensure that MINURCAT's support needs are included in the EUFOR support plan. Capacities that EUFOR is unable to provide, such as vertical engineering, are being sought under letter-of-assist arrangements directly from EUFOR troop-contributing countries.

IV. Establishment of the European Union-led peacekeeping force in Chad/Central African Republic

30. Under paragraph 6 of resolution 1778 (2007), the Security Council authorized the European Union to: contribute to protecting civilians in danger, particularly refugees and displaced persons; facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel; and contribute to protecting United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment and to ensuring the security and freedom of movement of its staff and United Nations and associated personnel.

31. On 15 October, the European Union approved a joint action for the deployment of a bridging military operation in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic (EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic) in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy. The European Union has designated General Patrick Nash (Ireland), based in Paris, as the Operational Commander and General Jean-Philippe Ganascia (France) as the Force Commander of EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic in Chad and the Central African Republic.

32. United Nations and European Union planners have cooperated closely to ensure that the establishment of EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic meets the security requirements of the population at risk and of United Nations personnel operating in the area. In this connection, United Nations planners have deployed to the European Union operational headquarters in Paris to work alongside the European Union planners.

33. The European Union-led force in Chad/Central African Republic has encountered unanticipated delays in its force generation process that will ultimately

have an impact on its roll-out plan in eastern Chad and the north-eastern Central African Republic. Should such delays persist or result in a review of EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic enablers, MINURCAT's ability to deploy will be affected. It is therefore critical that the member States of the European Union provide the necessary capabilities.

34. The European Union and the United Nations have initiated an exchange of letters, which will serve as the basis for the upcoming technical arrangements or memorandums of understanding. These documents will provide further details on the relationship between the European Union and the United Nations at Headquarters and in the area of operations, and will also set forth the relationship between the Force Commander of EUFOR and my Special Representative.

V. Financial implications

35. My proposed budget for the establishment and maintenance of MINURCAT for the 2007/08 financial period amounts to $197.4 million and is currently before the General Assembly for its consideration and approval.

36. Pending the adoption by the General Assembly of a financing resolution for the Mission and receipt of assessed contributions, the Mission's deployment is being funded from the commitment authority, in the amount of $45.8 million granted by the Advisory Committee for the advance United Nations Mission in Chad and the Central African Republic (MINUTAC) for the 2007/08 period.

37. As at 31 August 2007, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $2,479.9 million.

VI. Observations and recommendations

38. The security situation in eastern Chad has remained volatile and unpredictable. The renewed violence has put the civilian population living in the area at increased risk and will further impede the work of the humanitarian community in providing the much needed assistance to the population at risk.

39. While preparation for the deployment of MINURCAT and the European Union-led peacekeeping force Chad/Central African Republic is ongoing, it is equally important for the Chadian stakeholders concerned to take the political steps necessary to settle their differences through dialogue. I call on all parties to immediately cease hostilities and renew their commitment to the implementation of the political process they have agreed upon. I also call on the international community to stand ready to further assist the partners, as appropriate, in the implementation of these agreements.

40. With regard to the Central African Republic, I am pleased to note the efforts of the Government to establish the necessary structures to ensure an inclusive dialogue. I call on the international community to contribute to these efforts and to provide the necessary technical and financial means, as appropriate.

41. The complementary and parallel deployment of MINURCAT and the European Union peacekeeping force Chad/Central African Republic under a single Security Council mandate breaks new ground in peacekeeping operations. I am particularly

pleased to report that collaboration between the United Nations and the European Union has gone very well in the planning stages for the two missions. I have no doubt this will continue as the two operations are deployed on the ground.

42. It is my hope that the European Union will soon be able to generate all capacities required for EUFOR Chad/Central African Republic. In the event that the European Union is not able to generate its desired force level and enablers, a EUFOR deployment with limited capabilities would have a direct impact on the ability of MINURCAT to implement its mandate. Without credible security arrangements on the ground, the Mission will not be able to deploy in eastern Chad. In this context, I appeal to all relevant Member States to provide the force requirements necessary to enable the European Union force to deploy with the needed robustness and credibility.

43. The deployment of MINURCAT and the European Union-led peacekeeping force alone will not solve the crisis plaguing the subregion. The parallel deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and progress with the Darfur peace talks will also contribute to improving the security situation in the region. Both MINURCAT and UNAMID will therefore seek to ensure a regular and coherent critical flow of information and to develop close working relationships at all levels.

44. I have instructed MINURCAT to continue to closely consult with the Government of Chad on the modalities for the establishment of PTPH and to ensure that its concerns are taken into account. In so doing, however, the United Nations will remain bound by standing United Nations principles and policy guidelines, as well as the provisions of Security Council resolution 1778 (2007).

45. Finally, I would like to commend the important work that the entire staff of MINURCAT and BONUCA, as well as the United Nations country team and the humanitarian community, continue to carry out in Chad and the Central African Republic in contributing to the realization of peace and development in these countries.